

CHAPTER XVII

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

LABOUR WELFARE

Prior to Independence, there was no regular Government organization to look after the welfare of industrial workers, and to settle industrial disputes, and other connected labour problems. A separate Labour Department in the State was established in 1949. The Labour Officer, Rohtak, and the Conciliation Officer, Bhiwani, represented the department for this district. After the creation of Haryana, these two offices have been combined. Now the jurisdiction of the Labour Officer-cum-Conciliation Officer, Sonapat, working under the Labour Commissioner, Haryana at Chandigarh, extends over the Rohtak district.

As Labour Officer, he is assisted by the Labour Inspector, Sonapat (with jurisdiction over the Rohtak district except the Rohtak tahsil), the Labour Inspector, Bhiwani (who looks after the implementation of labour laws in the Rohtak tahsil also), and the Shop Inspector, Rohtak. As Conciliation Officer, he initiates conciliation proceedings for the settlement of industrial disputes and tries to settle disputes by mediation and by joint discussion. On his failure the matter is referred to the Labour Court/Industrial Tribunal, Faridabad through Government.¹

Labour Legislation

Labour legislation is necessary to tackle economic and social problems as civil laws in general, do not particularly deal with labour problems. The labour laws are motivated by a humanitarian approach, as propounded by the International Labour Organization and are based on the principles of social justice. Labour, under the Constitution of India, is a concurrent subject and as such both the Central and the States' Legislatures are empowered to make laws. Accordingly, the State Government has also enacted certain labour legislation to suit the local needs. The more important labour laws in force and their main provisions are detailed in Table XLV of Appendix.

1. Reference to National Tribunal is to be made by Central Government to cover such cases as are of national importance or those in which establishments in more than one State may be affected.

Industrial relations.—The relations between the employees and the employer are governed by the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. The Labour Officer-cum-Conciliation Officer, Sonapat, is responsible for enforcing it. His efforts are directed towards fostering good relations between the management and the workers by removing, as far as possible, the causes of friction and by timely redress of the grievances of the parties. Emphasis is laid on settlement of disputes, through direct negotiations across the table, or voluntary arbitration, rather than through compulsory adjudication.

Though the functions of the Conciliation Officer are advisory and he has no direct power to make or vary awards or agreements, he has been successful in bringing about a large number of agreements between the parties. During the period 1967-68, 360 disputes were handled by the Conciliation Officer in the district. Of these, 94 were settled through his intervention, 47 were referred to adjudication and the rest were either withdrawn or rejected as frivolous.

Works committees.—To promote good relations between the employers and workmen, there is a provision in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, for the setting up of works committees in the industrial establishments, employing 100 or more workmen. Such committees, consisting of representatives of the employers and the workmen exist in the following establishments:—

- (1) Haryana Co-operative Sugar Mills Limited, Rohtak,
- (2) Mohan Spinning Mill, Rohtak, (3) The Atlas Cycle Industries Limited, Sonapat, (4) The Milton Cycle Industries Limited, Sonapat, (5) Bharat Porcelain, Sonapat,
- (6) Organo Chemical Industries, Sonapat, (7) Aggarwal Glass Company, Sonapat, (8) Bharat Steel Tubes Limited, Ganaur, (9) Hindusthan Twyford's Limited, Bahadurgarh,
- (10) Hindusthan National Glass Manufacturing Company Limited, Bahadurgarh, (11) United Steel and Allied Industries, Bahadurgarh, (12) Hindustan Dowidat Tools Limited, Sonapat, (13) Municipal Committee, Sonapat, and (14) Municipal Committee, Rohtak.

Strikes.—In spite of the efforts to promote good relations between the employers and workmen, strikes occur now and then. The details of the noticeable strikes that occurred in the district during 1967 and 1968 are given in Table XLVI of Appendix.

Trade unions.—Judging from the increasing number of registered trade unions, the trade union movement in the district has gained

momentum since Independence. In 1968 there were 42 trade unions registered under the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926. Their list may be seen, vide Table XLVII of Appendix.

Factories Act, 1948.—The Act regulates the conditions of labour in factories not using power and employing 20 or more workers and in factories using power and employing 10 or more workers. Elaborate provisions have been made in the Act regarding the conditions of work inside the factories including hours of work, leave with wages in case of occupational diseases, employment of young persons, safeguards for health, hygiene, and promotion of safety and the welfare of workers in general. Special provisions exist for young persons and women. Facilities for rendering first-aid, running canteens and creches, making available drinking-water, etc., near the place of work are also provided.

With the establishment of large-scale units during the Third Five-Year Plan, the execution of various provisions of the Factories Act for labour welfare assumed special importance. The attitude of the employer has changed in favour of providing better amenities to labour. Consequently, there is no special problem about the enforcement of statutory provisions like appointment of a Labour Officer and provision of basic amenities at the place of work. Promising and progressive factories like Hindusthan Twyford's Limited (Bahadurgarh), Hindusthan National Glass Manufacturing Company Limited (Bahadurgarh), Mohan Spinning Mill (Rohtak), Bharat Steel Tubes Limited (Ganaur), the Atlas Cycle Industries Limited (Sonapat) and Hindustan Dowdat Tools Limited (Sonapat) have gone a step further and provided, among other facilities free medical aid, sale of consumer goods at fair prices on credit, residential quarters and transport to and from factory site.

The Factories Act, 1948, is administered in this district by the Inspector of Factories, Ambala, and by the Medical Inspector of Factories, Ambala. The Labour Officer-cum-Conciliation Officer, and the Labour Inspector also act as Inspectors of Factories. The Deputy Chief Medical Officer (Health) also functions as Additional Inspector of Factories for enforcing the health provisions contained in the Factories Act.

Employees' Provident Funds Scheme.—The wages of industrial workers are not sufficient to enable them to save adequately for their old age. When old age or illness renders them unfit for work, they are forced to lead a life of abject poverty and dependence. In the

event of a worker's premature death, his dependents are left destitute. The Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, framed by the Government of India, under the Employees' Provident Funds Act, 1952, attempts to remedy this situation.

Starting with 6 industries, the Act now covers 107 industries. Previously, it was applicable to the factories employing 50 or more persons, but the limit was lowered from December 31, 1960, and factories/establishments employing 20 or more persons were covered under the scheme. In the Rohtak district 43 factories/establishments were covered by March 31, 1966 and out of 2,991 workers, 2,200 contributed to the scheme.

Provident Fund contribution is deducted at the rate of $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent from the monthly wages of the employees subscribing to the Fund and an equal amount is contributed by the employers. The rate of contribution has since been enhanced from $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent to 8 per cent, in certain industries/establishments. The entire amount is deposited with the State Bank of India in Employees' Provident Funds Account. The administrative charges at a fixed rate are contributed additionally by the employers. The fund vests in a Central Board of Trustees having nominees of the Central Government, State Government and representatives of employers and employees. The Central Provident Fund Commissioner at New Delhi is the Chief Executive Officer. The Regional Provident Fund Commissioner at Chandigarh is responsible for the implementation of the scheme in Punjab, Haryana and the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh.

The members can draw an advance for payment of premia on their Life Insurance Policies, purchase of a dwelling site or house, construction of a house, purchase of shares of consumer co-operative societies, for expenses in case of serious illness, etc.

To afford financial assistance to the nominees/heirs of the deceased members, a Death Relief Fund was set up in 1964. A minimum of Rs. 500 is assured by way of relief. A non-refundable advance is also granted in case of individual retrenchment in order to mitigate the immediate hardship.

A member is allowed to withdraw the full amount standing to his credit in the Fund under such circumstances as on completing 15 years of membership, on attaining the age of 55 years, after retirement from service, retirement on account of permanent and total incapacity

for work, migration from India for permanent settlement abroad and termination of service in the case of mass retrenchment.

Employees' State Insurance Scheme.—It is designed to provide security to the industrial workers against sickness, maternity and employment injury in the form of cash benefits. Wherever applicable, the scheme is compulsory.¹ The following contribution is made by the employers and the employees:—

- (1) Till the enforcement of the scheme, an employer is to pay a special contribution at the rate of 0.75 per cent of the total wages. From the day the purview of medical benefits is extended to any station, the employer's special contribution is payable at the rate given in Schedule I of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948. The employers of implemented areas are however paying 2.5 per cent at present as an interim arrangement.
- (2) An employee is to contribute about 2.5 per cent of his wages from the day the scheme is extended to that area.

The scheme functions under the Employees' State Insurance Corporation which has its headquarters at New Delhi. It is under the administrative control of the Director General, Employees' State Insurance Corporation, New Delhi. The scheme is at present executed in the State through the Regional Director, Employees' State Insurance Scheme, Circular Road, Amritsar,² who inspects factories, collects contributions and arranges payment of cash benefits.

The provision of medical benefit is the statutory responsibility of the State Government and facilities are to be given according to the standards laid down by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation. Most of the expenditure on medical care is contributed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation and only 1/8 of the total expenditure is borne by the State Government. The expenditure on

1. The workers (drawing rupees four hundred or less per mensem) of the factories employing 20 or more persons and using power in the manufacturing process, are covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948. Exemption is given in the case of workers working in seasonal factories or factories which are not using power, or in tea plantations, mines, railway running sheds and defence concerns.

2. The constitution of a separate Regional Board for Haryana is under consideration.

other cash benefits is to be met entirely out of the Employees' State Insurance Fund and is arranged by the Regional Director.

To begin with, the scheme was implemented in Sonapat in 1961. By December, 1965, there were 4,300 beneficiaries who were covered under the scheme. It was extended to Rohtak and Bahadurgarh from February 27, 1966, and the number of beneficiaries increased to 7,300 by March 31, 1967.

Subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme.—Realising the importance of housing and environmental hygiene as a welfare amenity at a rental within the means of the workers, the Government of India initiated the Subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme in September 1952.

Two colonies have been established under this scheme with 200 houses, half of them one-roomed and the other half two-roomed at Rohtak and 126 houses at Sonapat. The rent is charged at the rate of Rs. 11 for a one-roomed house and Rs. 14 for a two-roomed house per month. Workers getting a salary of not more than Rs. 250 per mensem are entitled to a one-roomed house while those getting up to Rs. 350 per mensem to a two-roomed house. The colonies are provided with electricity and water, and there is provision for parks and other modern amenities.

Subsidised by the Government, Bawa Iron and Steel Works Limited, Sonapat, has constructed 30 two-roomed tenements. One tenement consists of 2 rooms, a kitchen, bath and a flush latrine. A worker has to pay only Rs. 14.50 per month as rent. The colony is situated about 100 yards away from the factory. This enables the workers residing in these tenements to enjoy fresh food at their residence during the interval.

Labour Welfare Centre.—The Government Labour Welfare Centre started at Rohtak in 1960, was shifted to Sonapat in April 1965. Indoor and outdoor games are organized at the Centre, and radio sets and musical instruments are provided for recreational and cultural activities. Women are imparted training in sewing and embroidery. There is also a library-cum-reading room.

PROHIBITION

Rohtak went dry on October 2, 1948. The district was singled out for an experiment in prohibition by the first post-Independence Government of the erstwhile East Punjab on the ground that its inhabitants were vegetarians by and large.

Unfortunately, alcoholic consumption, instead of going down, increased. People started meeting their requirements through illicit sources. There were two such major sources. First, liquor was transported from the neighbouring wet districts of this State, as also from adjoining district of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Union Territory of Delhi. The trade in liquor from this source was carried on by the licensees of the neighbouring districts who transported liquor from the distilleries to their vends and shops situated within a radius of 5 miles of the boundaries of the Rohtak district. Second, illicit distillation supply was made by bootleggers who carried on their nefarious trade in villages to which approach roads were not available. Table XLVIII of Appendix shows the rising trend of prohibition offences from 1951 onwards.

The experiment thus created an ugly law and order problem. The State Government lost excise revenue on one hand and had to spend huge amounts on enforcement of the prohibition programme on the other. The new State of Haryana, faced with limited financial resources, could hardly afford this luxury and so it scrapped prohibition from April 1, 1967. This has brought the State Government an additional income of Rs. 1,20,00,000.

ADVANCEMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES

The Scheduled Castes, Vimukat Jatis and Other Backward Classes¹ residing in the district are as under:

<u>Scheduled Castes</u>	<u>Vimukat Jatis</u>	<u>Other Backward Classes</u>
Ad Dharmi	Bangali	Jhinwar
Bangali	Barar	Nai (Kuleen Brahman)
Barar, Burar or Berar	Bauria	Kumhar
Batwal	Gandhila	Khati (Jangra Brahman)
Bauria or Bawaria	Sansi	Lohar

1. Scheduled Castes have been defined in Article 341 of the Constitution of India. Vimukat Jatis connote such a tribe, gang or class of persons or any part of a tribe, gang or class of persons which were deemed to be Criminal Tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act VI of 1924. 'Other Backward Classes' include backward classes other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, recognised as such by the State Government on social and/or economic basis. Scheduled Castes professing a religion other than Hinduism are also deemed to be other Backward Classes.

Scheduled Castes	Vimukat Jatis	Other Backward Classes
Bazigar	Kuchband	Jogi Nath
Balmiki, Chura or Bhangi	Rechhbana	Gawaria (Banjara)
Bhanjra	Aharia or Aheri	Dhobi
Chamar, Jatia Chamar, Rehgar, Raigar, Ramdasi or Ravidasi	Singhikat	Baragi
Dagi	Dhe	Bhat
Dhanak		Dakut
Dumna, Mahasha or Doom		Chhipi, Tank or Darzi
Kabir Panthi or Julaha		Naiks, Aheria or Aheri
Khatik		Bharbhunja
Kori or Koli		Manihar
Mazhabi		Bagria
Nat		
Od		
Pasi		
Perna		
Sansi, Bhedkut or Manesh		
Sapela		
Sarera		
Sikligar		
Sirkiband		

These people are scattered all over the district. Khatiks, Dhobis, Naiks and Bharbhunjias are generally found in the towns; Kabir Panthis and Meghs in Gohana area; Bawarias in the Jhajjar tahsil; Dhes, a nomadic tribe, in Rohtak town; and some of the others like Sansis and Jogi Naths mostly reside in the rural areas. Some of the

main professions pursued by these classes include agricultural labour, weaving, leather tanning, shoemaking, sweeping and scavenging, *chhaj*, basket and *sirki* making, and grain roasting.

The 1951 Census recorded 1,98,922 persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes in the district while the number recorded in the 1961 Census was 2,43,958 (1,27,121 males and 1,16,837 females), thus showing an increase of about 23 per cent during 1951—61. In 1961, they formed 17.2 per cent of the total population of the district. Among the Scheduled Castes enumerated, Chamars claimed the highest number (1,21,124), followed by Balmikis (61,136), Dhanaks (46,586), Kabir Panthis (7,885), Khatiks (2,718) and Bawarias (1,340).

The Department of Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes has adopted certain measures for the benefit of these classes in pursuance of the Directive Principles embodied in the Constitution of India.

Removal of untouchability.—Article 17 of the Constitution of India abolished untouchability and forbade its practice in any form. The practice of untouchability was also declared an offence under the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955. Despite these constitutional guarantees, it is extant in one form or another, especially in the rural areas. To eradicate untouchability, a special programme is carried on through community centres known as Sanskar Kendras and Balwadis. These are started at places where there are large concentrations of members of the Scheduled Castes and other Backward Classes. These centres are open to all classes without any distinction. Besides the three R's, women are taught cooking, first-aid, home nursing, care of the baby, mending of clothes and some craft by a Lady Social Worker, while children are taught cleanliness, games, good behaviour and cultivation of right habits. The charges on cloth, sewing machines and books are met by the Government.

Eight community centres are functioning in villages Sisana and Sanghi (Rohtak tahsil), Kundli and Saidpur (Sonapat tahsil), Khanpur Khurd, Salhawas and Jhajjar (Jhajjar tahsil), and Bichhpari (Gohana tahsil). For the construction of a community centre building, a sum of Rs. 2,000 is paid as subsidy by the Government and an equivalent amount is contributed by the respective *panchayats* which also provide a free site for the building. The centre is maintained in the village as long as necessary. In each centre the staff consists

of one male and one female Social Worker and one Lady Attendant, preferably a trained Dai.

Encouragement for education.—The persons belonging to these classes are by and large, illiterate. The special measures taken by the Government to spread education among them have been described in the Chapter on 'Education and Culture'.

Subsidy for construction of new houses.—For providing shelter to the homeless members of Scheduled Castes and Vimukat Jatis, subsidies are granted for the construction of new houses. A subsidy of Rs. 900 for the construction of a house is given to a person who has no house of his own.¹ The proprietary rights of the house remain vested in the Government for 20 years and thereafter the house becomes the property of the beneficiary. The latter, of course, has free use of the house during this period. During the period 1956-57 to 1966-67, a sum of Rs. 2,40,300 was disbursed to 322 beneficiaries. Of these, 313 persons have constructed their houses.

Subsidy for house sites.—Overcrowding of houses in Harijan *bastis* in the rural area poses a serious problem. Although the Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961, has conferred upon Harijans the proprietary rights over the sites under their houses, yet the problem remains unsolved. A subsidy of Rs. 200 is, therefore, granted to each deserving and needy member of the Scheduled Castes for the purchase of a new house site to relieve congestion in the *bastis*. The scheme was introduced during 1958-59 and up to March 1967, 103 persons benefited from it and received Rs. 20,600 as subsidy.²

Drinking-water amenities.—Grants are given to Harijans in rural as well as urban areas for the provision of drinking-water facilities. The wells and hand-pumps constructed as such are open to the

1. A house consisting of one room, one verandah, a kitchen and a courtyard on a total area of 125 or 150 square yards is constructed. The unskilled labour and site are provided by the beneficiary himself.

2. The scheme has been withdrawn since April 1, 1967.

general public also. A sum of Rs. 58,270 has been granted in 195 cases during 1956-57 to 1966-67 for the following projects:—

	Number	Amount (Rs.)
Sinking of new wells	46	25,215
Fixation of hand-pumps	12	2,000
Repair of old wells	137	31,055

Facilities for industrial training. In order to improve the economic condition of the Scheduled Castes and Vimukat Jatis, young people are trained for a year or two as skilled workers in industrial training institutes, industrial schools, etc., so that they may be able to seek gainful employment after the completion of their training. A stipend of Rs. 45 is given during the course of such training. This particular scheme is calculated to improve the status not only of the individual concerned but also of the families to which they belong.

Grant of interest-free loan.—For lack of finance, members of the Backward Classes find it difficult to establish themselves in the profession of law, medicine, engineering and architecture. They also need money for establishing or expanding an industry, business or trade. They are, therefore, helped with loans, free of interest, under the Punjab Backward Classes (Grant of Loans) Act, 1957. These loans are recovered in 20 half-yearly instalments and the first recovery starts after the lapse of four years from the date of drawal of the loan. The maximum amount which is granted to a borrower is Rs. 2,000.

The scheme was introduced in 1958-59, and up to March 31, 1967, a sum of Rs. 1,74,975 was advanced to 296 persons from this district.

Subsidy for purchase of agricultural lands.—Members of Scheduled Castes and Vimukat Jatis generally depend on land for their livelihood but they have no land of their own. To help the deserving landless members of these communities to acquire land, a subsidy of Rs. 2,000 is granted to a member who in turn has to contribute the remaining amount from his own resources. The land has to be not less than 5 acres whose value should not be less than Rs. 900

per acre. A person so settled is given a subsidy of Rs. 500 for constructing a house on the land purchased. A sum of Rs. 4,28,000 has been given as subsidy to 214 beneficiaries during the period 1956-57 to 1966-67.

Legal assistance.—The members of the Scheduled Castes and Vimukta Jatis are provided with legal assistance to defend themselves in cases involving ejectment from land, etc. The implementation of this scheme is under the charge of the Deputy Commissioner. During the period 1956-57 to 1966-67, this assistance has been granted in 18 cases and amounts to Rs. 1,908.

Mention may also be made of some of the representative institutions or branches of all-India institutions working for the uplift of the Backward Classes. These are: Harijan Sewak Sangh, Bharat Sewak Samaj, Sweepers Union, Haryana Backward Classes Federation, Haryana Harijan Ashram, Scheduled Castes Federation, Gandhi Harijan Sewa Ashram, and Ravi Dass Hostel—all operating from Rohtak town. Of these, Harijan Sewak Sangh and Bharat Sewak Samaj are the two institutions pursuing a regular programme under the guidance and advice of the all-India bodies concerned. Gandhi Harijan Sewa Ashram and Ravi Dass Hostel are also rendering considerable assistance by providing free lodging facilities.

The problem of Harijan welfare is gigantic. Considering that Harijans form a sizeable portion of the population, the funds available to finance deserving schemes are relatively meagre. Therefore, the schemes aimed at economic uplift of these classes have resulted in improvement of the economic condition of a very small number.

Charitable Organizations.

These play an important role in society. Many educational institutions, hospitals, dharmshalas and other similar institutions are run by these organisations. The finances are either provided by contributions, or by revenue-free lands attached to some of these. Math Baba Mast Nath is of special note. Its public welfare programme includes the propagation of *sadachar* and *yoga*. An eye and general hospital, a pharmacy and an Ayurvedic degree college are run by the *Math*.

The Jat Educational Society and Vaish Educational Society are other important charitable organisations which run various educational institutions.